

6-30-1869

Letter from Sarah Whitney, to Anne Whitney, Dresden, Germany, 1869 June 30

Sarah Whitney

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1
Wed. evng June 30. 69

True as the Sun, the letter has come with its dear words of cheer - That you my beloved Anne & Addy were in good health & spirits on the 12th ready to shake off the dust of the scarlet woman's city from yr feet is matter for great joy in these hearts at home. In some late letter, I expressed Mother's & my own wish that something might induce you to move to Florence. Constantly, ever since I read the description of yr. Statue has the fear grown (notwithstanding the wish) that you have made Rome too hot a place to be lived by you in safety - & the account of yr Country woman's anger only confirms the fear. I saw the other day in the Advertiser a pleasant & flattering description by Miss Brewster of Miss Stebbins' fountains & studies for other ornamentations of Central Park - May she ^(Miss S.) say & do no evil that shall make us wish that her shafts had been stayed before they reached yr. Studies. It cannot be but that yr work will excite bitter hatred & I must think it is a rash boarding of the lion in his den if not an uncourteous one. The tumbling in Italian air wh occasionally comes to our ears makes me hope at the same time that the cause of liberty may be strengthened by every good word & work of Yankee visitors, but the perils of the dance make me anxious, & fill my heart with the prayer that its advocates may be ~~as~~ wiser than the serpents they wld expel.

Fri. A.M. before sunrise. These strawberry days as well as some others bring so little

leisure for writing, I am obliged to despatch
upon the morning chop to wipe off epistolary scores.
Yesterday (Sant Inpto having been with us more
than a week) was devoted to the reception of her
children & grandchildren. On Sat last came
James, & Mr & Mrs Buffum, making the
Sth my Sunday very agreeable, in all but the
discontent that it ~~could~~ not be made more
agreeable to the visitors by a drive through
some paradise that June has made for us by
its superabundant rain. If July & Aug. sh^d be
as juicy, Katy will scarce enjoy the mountains
as we desire. The weather all over the world
seems sadly out of joint. Yesterday we entered
July over a dousing fire & to day's prospect is
no more favorable. The strawberries must be
sour, but plenty of sugar makes them disappear
with alacrity & praise. Day before yesterday, E.
baked pickers & sent 30 or 40 boxes to market,
the peddling to friends & acquaintances having
become somewhat burdensome through the
distances necessary to be traveled.

P.S. While Fanny was being shod this morning
I took the cars to W. Newton to see what prospect
there is of the mountain journey, & found that
still there is no fixed plan - the difficulty of finding
the right combination of good things - such as
cheapness, pleasantness, accessibility & good fare
being hard to overcome - Besides, difficulties there
all poor Katie's way even in her own house so that
it seems as if it might be impossible for her to get
out of it. If she is not wholly thrown back into her
old state of prostration by the departure of the
cook upon whom she had fully relied to bear the

Summer's burden of an increased family, I shall be
very thankful. The girl has been gone more than a
week, having given a fortnight's notice of her intention
& in all that time H. has been unable to hear of any
one whom she can take to fill her place. Still she is
determined to go away if possible, & I am to go with her
if that is practicable. Emma Whitney is going on
the 20th of this month to a farm house in Bethlehem
by invitation of some Brooklyn friends, but I don't
see that that opens a possibility for us, & I don't know
what does. My experience last year in pleasure seeking
among the Notts makes me somewhat fearful of mixing
my fortune with Katie's - but perhaps something good
will turn up.

I don't think I referred to any particular M.D.
as more attractive than Scalis - I only wished that
our friends had been induced to seek out such
an one. Dr. S. is a rather Joe Bunkerish Yankee
with considerable insight I think, but little
culture. Either from scarcity of patients or surplus
of sympathy, he manifests an interest in those
who seek his help that ought to accrue to their
benefit - Not that he makes unnecessary visits
or usages in any way the use of his medicines - but
he never forgets the needs he has been called to
minister to or fails to make particular inquiry
after the welfare of his friends. If he lived in
a handsome house, I have no doubt he would
have a higher reputation for skill in the healing
art. I know his wife that she can keep a milliners
shop as well as take care of her house & family

to eke out an honest living, but I did find more pleasure in the society of both and their means allow a neater & more tasteful house-keeping - as it is I prefer as a social acquaintance Dr Stone & his pretty little wife - but for medical advice I turn to Homoeopathy - to Dr Scales for father & mother - to Dr Somebody else when I want it for myself.

The papers say that Edmonia Lewis was at the Annual Festival for the Freedmen's Teachers yesterday. That we were not there to see her & friends whom we were very desirous to meet was a miserable blunder that we much regret. Ball's Washington is going up in the public garden. I hope it will give better satisfaction there than its companion Everett. Miss Greene & her mother have hired a house in Lancaster to wh. they go quite soon. I meant to have carried the 2 Lizzies some strawberries before this & looked once more into the studio where we still all the ~~Plutonic~~ gods you left there. At least I have had none of them removed. Sometimes I wish for a chair or a table or a sideboard or something that was pretty or useful in days of yore, but generally I am satisfied with ~~with~~ the number of old waste traps that we already possess, & I make no effort to obtain more. Mr. old neighbor Hemmenway having married his oldest daughter has gone with the other (I believe) & the rest of the world to Europe. Mrs Mc. Gaw (born Bates, married Hathorne) has also gone. Mrs Willard brought report of you to some of the Robbins the other day, & of the sickness of Rome

Sam. J. M.

2

"The fourth" opens upon us pretty fiercely but as it is to be celebrated on the fifth there is a chance ^{that} chills & colds & not our strokes may make the day memorable to the crowds that turn their faces cityward. To day we must pity the straw berry pickers & the hay makers though they may rejoice in the sun shine that turns their fields into currency. A question you asked in a late letter about Mr. Bonwell will take a wiser head than mine to answer. I only know that the ^{republican} papers speak his praise & I read no other. I dare say Mr. Carroll & some others could promise to manage the finances better, but I doubt if gold would go down any faster. I wish it might & at the same time am thankful that matters are no worse in this rush to ruinage. It was a pleasant bit of intelligence I got the other day from Katie L. wh. neither carried on my eyes look in at the wedding, that Harry's wife's bridal dress was white muslin with not a particle of trimming. A white veil, & wreath & streamers of Smilax were exceedingly becoming ornaments to the sweet & too delicate face & kept our eyes from inspection of their adjuncts. In striking contrast with this simplicity was the "class day" costume of a Watertown girl, one Jean of wh. was a muslin skirt buckled to the waist & every neck trimmed with Valenciennes lace. It seemed a pity that Harry's masculine lover & partner could not find a

freedom. This morn'g for once I blast the guns & bells
that called me from dream-land - for a mental
or physical indigestion had thrown me into an
agony of tears over those words wh. Carrie had
whispered in my ear - "Anne is eager to get rid
of her toy for she has set the river on fire with it"
How the word had come, or from whence I did not learn.
I only knew I was utterly wretched over the fulfilment
of my own prophecy; & glad enough was I to wake
to the jubilation of Young America, though it did
not banish the remembrance of despotic Rome.
Lest you should think my devotions had been paid
to the delicacies of Carrie's table, I must say that
bread & strawberries ~~formed~~ ^{were} the chief of my diet - &
the ~~stated~~ mental fare had been a study of the
Encyclopaedia. Doubtless you will recommend
something lighter next time if the result must
be served up for ~~you~~ fortnightly entertainment;
Well! I rather think there is nothing for me
to write about but the pictures - They still delight
my eyes & rejoice my heart whenever a visitor
comes. It is a blessed good thing to have such
a fund of entertainment at hand. - I only
wish I knew more about each thing, ^{represented} & to that
end I employ leisure moments to read up. I want
more stereoscopic pictures & hope you will lay
in a store in yr summer travels. It is a
great delight to me to travel all over
the world with my eyes at so little cost
of time strength & money.
Most lovingly to Addie & yourself
Yr own Parah.

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Mrs Anne Whitney

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